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TALKING ABOUT TURKEY:

HOW TO BUY, STORE, THAW, STUFF, AND PREPARE YOUR HOLIDAY BIRD

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Introduction

You might think that because turkey is the main attraction in many an American holiday meal most consumers know all they need or want to know about how to buy, store, thaw, stuff, and prepare it. But that is not necessarily the case, as shown by inquiries received by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Meat and Poultry Hotline.

So let's talk turkey.

Maybe you're a first-timer who has offered or was drafted to cook that important holiday bird. First-timers often learn the "how to's" from well meaning friends or relatives who may unintentionally pass on erroneous information.

Even if you're an old hand who has prepared many turkeys, there may be better — or safer — methods than the ones you're accustomed to.

Talking About Turkey is stuffed with expert advice you can rely on from the time you buy a turkey to the time you wrap up the leftovers. You'll find easy-to-use charts on thawing, cooking times, temperatures, and recipes to round out your meal.

This year let *Talking About Turkey* be your guide to a **safe and delicious** holiday meal.

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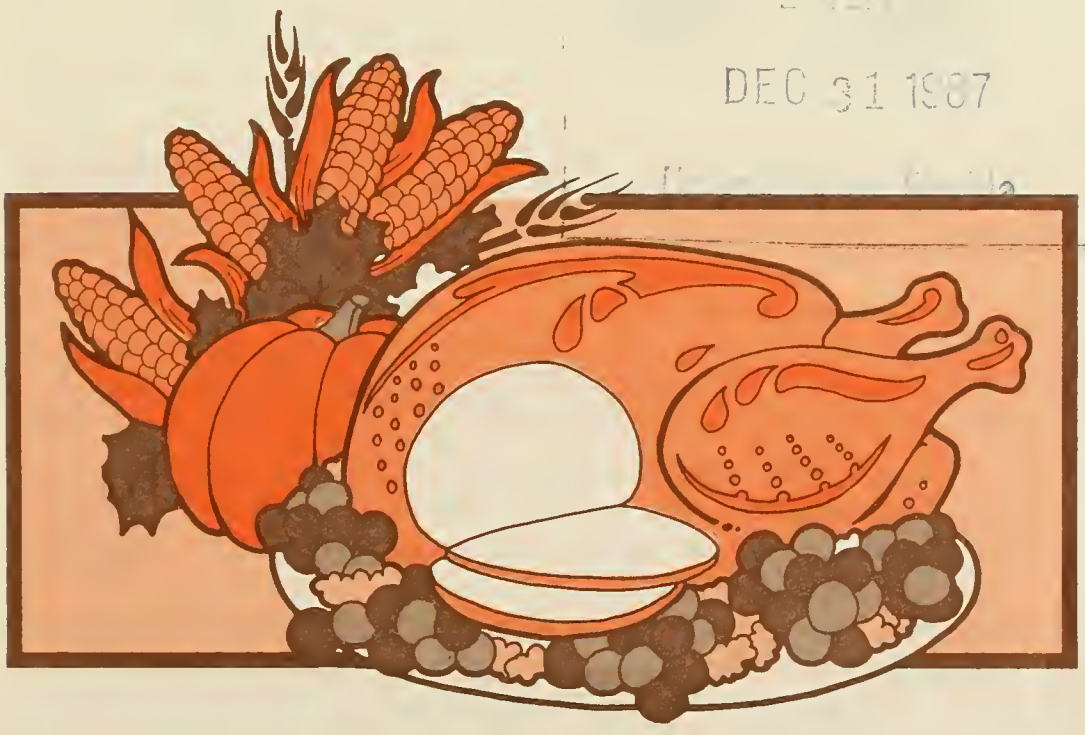


How To Buy Your Bird

AND WHAT TO LOOK FOR ON THE LABEL

Turkeys come in all sizes to fit everyone's holiday meal plans. They can be purchased whole as in the traditional manner, or in parts, suitable for small families or those who have a preference for white or dark meat only. They come fresh or frozen, self-basting and prestuffed.

Because so many different types of turkeys are available in the market today, you can be sure you are getting exactly what you want by carefully reading the label.

There are two important pieces of information to look for before you make your selection. An inspection mark on the label lets you know the turkey has been inspected and that it is safe, wholesome,

and accurately labeled. Some 95 percent of all turkeys — and other meat and poultry products — are inspected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Another symbol you will find on many packages is a USDA grade mark — usually grade A. Turkeys that are grade A are meaty, have a well developed layer of fat in the skin, and are practically free from pinfeathers, bruises, cuts, tears on the breast and legs, and broken bones.

How can you be sure of buying a tender turkey? The age category on the label is the key. The younger the turkey, the more tender and mild flavored it will be. All turkeys in the market are young and will be labeled *young turkey* (usually 4 to 6 months of age). There are also young turkeys labeled *fryer-roaster turkey* (usually under 16 weeks of age). The sex designation of *hen* or *tom* is optional on the label, and is an indication of size rather than the tenderness of a turkey.

Fresh or Frozen Turkeys?

Another choice shoppers make is whether to buy a fresh or frozen turkey. There is no significant difference in quality between a fresh turkey and a frozen one; the choice is based on personal preference.

STORING FROZEN TURKEYS

If you are one of those people who likes to shop well in advance of when you will be serving your meal, then a frozen turkey is your best bet. At the market, look for one that is solidly frozen.

Many frozen turkeys are now available pre-basted, and some are pre-stuffed. By reading the label carefully, you can be sure of getting exactly what you want.

A whole frozen turkey — prestuffed or unstuffed — can be stored in your home freezer at 0°F or below for up to one year without appreciable loss of quality. Keep a prestuffed turkey in the freezer until you are ready to cook it. It should *not* be thawed, because bacteria can develop in the stuffing while the turkey thaws. Frozen whole turkeys do not need to be rewrapped for freezer storage unless the packaging has been opened or is punctured or torn.

STORING FRESH TURKEYS

The USDA recommends that for optimal safety, buy a fresh turkey only if you do your shopping within 1 or 2 days of when you plan to serve it. The reason is that fresh turkeys, like other fresh meat and poultry, are highly perishable. You need to be careful when purchasing and storing them to avoid spoilage. If you buy one too far in advance, it may start to spoil in your refrigerator before you're ready to cook it.

Here, too, some labels can be helpful by including "sell by" dates. The "sell by" date is the last day the turkey should be sold by the retailer. It will maintain optimal quality and safety for 1 or 2 days after this date.

You should avoid selecting a fresh turkey that is stacked above the top of the store's refrigerator case. Remember, once you get your fresh turkey home, refrigerate it right away at 40°F or below, and use it within 1 to 2 days.

Your market may be able to reserve a fresh turkey for you and hold it for last-minute pickup.

Fresh turkey parts can be frozen and stored in your freezer at 0°F or below for up to six months. The turkey parts should be repackaged in any type of moisture-vapor-resistant wrap such as freezer paper or heavy-duty aluminum foil to prevent freezer burn and the development of an off-flavor. Date packages before storing, and always use the oldest first. Turkey parts have a shorter freezer-life than do whole turkeys because more surface area is exposed, providing a greater opportunity for microbial contamination during processing and packaging.

Buying the Right Size Turkey

Once you have decided on the type of turkey you want to buy, the next question is how big it should be. You can figure on 1 pound of turkey per person. If the turkey is prestuffed, allow 1¼ pounds per person. This will provide generous servings with enough left over for second day dishes.

How To Safely Thaw A Frozen Turkey

Whether you have 4 days or 12 hours, you can **safely** thaw your frozen turkey without risking bacterial growth. Thawing your turkey in the refrigerator is the preferred method for safety reasons, but you can also thaw it in cold water. The thing to remember about both methods is that they keep your turkey **cold** while thawing — the key to preventing excessive bacterial growth.

And, no matter which method you select, cook the turkey promptly after thawing.

THAWING IN THE REFRIGERATOR

The following chart shows how long it will take to thaw turkeys of various sizes in the refrigerator. Simply place the turkey in its original wrap on a tray or in a pan to catch moisture that accumulates as it thaws.

Thawing Time in the Refrigerator

Whole Turkey	
8 to 12 pounds	1 to 2 days
12 to 16 pounds	2 to 3 days
16 to 20 pounds	3 to 4 days
20 to 24 pounds	4 to 5 days
Pieces of Large Turkey	
half, quarter, half breast	1 to 2 days

THAWING IN COLD WATER

If it's the day before you plan to serve your turkey and you just remembered that it's still sitting in the freezer, don't despair. Check the wrapping to make sure there are no tears, and simply place the bird in its unopened bag in the sink or in a large container and cover it with cold water. If the wrapping is torn, place the turkey in another plastic bag, close securely, and then place in water. You will need to change the water frequently to assure safe but effective thawing. The National Turkey Federation recommends every 30 minutes as a rule of thumb.

Thawing Time in Cold Water (Whole turkey)

8 to 12 pounds	4 to 6 hours
12 to 16 pounds	6 to 9 hours
16 to 20 pounds	9 to 11 hours
20 to 24 pounds	11 to 12 hours

THAWING IN A MICROWAVE OVEN

A turkey can also be thawed in a microwave oven. Since microwave ovens vary in what they can accommodate, check the manufacturer's instruction for the size turkey that will fit in your oven, the minutes per pound, and the power level to use for thawing.

MORE POINTERS ON THAWING

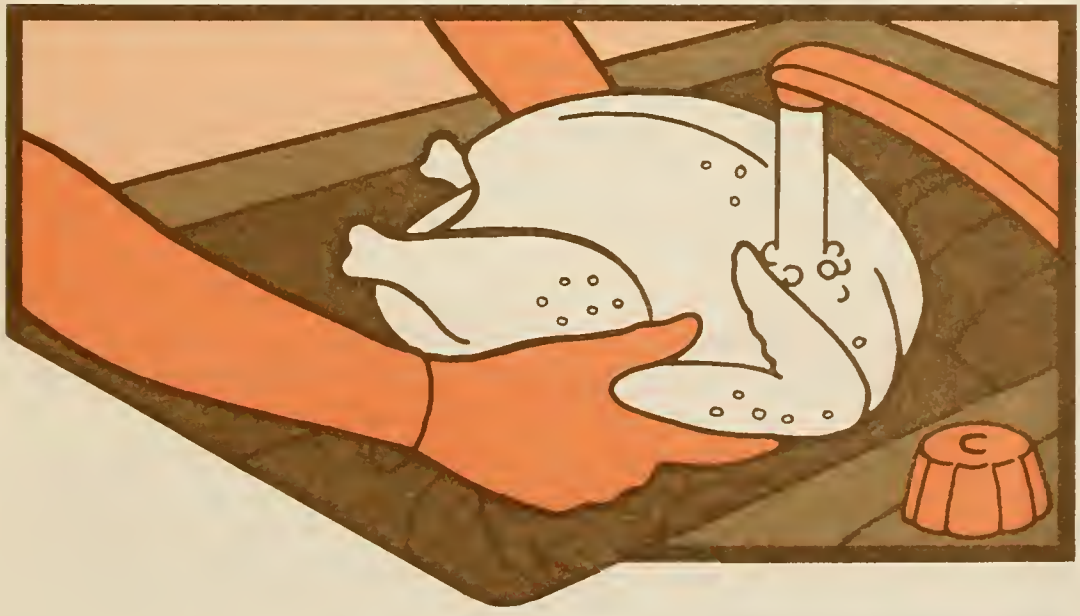
Again, remember that frozen, prestuffed turkeys should *not* be thawed before cooking. Frozen, unstuffed turkeys can also be cooked without being thawed. See instructions under "Other Cooking Methods."

If necessary, you can refreeze a partially thawed turkey as long as ice crystals are still visible in the cavity and the neck and giblets remain frozen. However, keep in mind that thawing and refreezing can affect the juiciness and flavor of the turkey.

You may be wondering why thawing your turkey on the kitchen counter isn't recommended. The reason is that room temperatures fall within the danger zone of 60°F to 125°F that promotes active growth of bacteria. Left on a kitchen counter, a frozen turkey will thaw from the outside in. As its surface warms, bacteria multiply. In the time that elapses while the turkey is thawing, the surface bacteria could multiply to dangerous levels. You can't rely on cooking to destroy all bacteria. Some food poisoning organisms produce toxins that withstand heat.

AFTER THE THAW, WASHING THE TURKEY

Once your turkey has thawed, it requires little preparation before cooking. Remove the neck and giblets from the neck and/or body cavities. Wash the inside and outside of the turkey and the giblets in cold water and drain well. To prevent the spread of bacteria, wash your hands, utensils and sink after they have come in contact with the raw turkey.



How To Stuff A Turkey

Actually, you can enjoy stuffing with your turkey whether or not you decide to stuff the bird. If you are in a hurry, you may want to bake your stuffing in a greased, covered casserole during the last hour while the turkey roasts. You'll save time by not stuffing the turkey and having to scoop the stuffing out to serve it once the turkey is done. And an unstuffed turkey takes less time to cook than one that is stuffed.

However, if you prefer to stuff the turkey, read on for some important pointers.

STUFFING POINTERS

It may seem like a good idea to save time by stuffing your turkey in advance, but that's inviting trouble, because harmful bacteria can multiply in the stuffing and cause food poisoning. Turkeys should be stuffed only at the last minute.

Dry stuffing ingredients may be prepared the day before, tightly covered, and left at room temperature. The perishables (butter or margarine, mushrooms, oysters, cooked celery and onions, broth) should be refrigerated. The ingredients should then be combined just before stuffing the turkey.

The cavity of the turkey should be stuffed lightly, because stuffing expands as it cooks.

Allow three-fourths of a cup of stuffing for each pound of ready-to-cook turkey. Extra stuffing may be baked separately.

To keep the stuffing in the turkey, you need to close the neck and body cavities. Fold the neck skin over the back and fasten with a skewer, trussing pins, clean string, or toothpicks; twist the wingtips under the back of the turkey to rest against the neck skin. To close the body cavity, use skewers, or tuck ends of legs under a band of skin at the tail, or into metal "hock-locks," if provided, or tie legs together with clean string.

How To Roast A Turkey

Place the turkey breast side up on a rack in a shallow roasting pan. Do not add water. Before placing the turkey in the oven, you may want to brush it with cooking oil, melted butter or margarine, although this is not necessary. Then cover the turkey with a loose tent of heavy-duty aluminum foil. To make a tent, tear off a sheet of foil 5 to 10 inches longer than the turkey. Crease foil crosswise through the center and place over the turkey, crimping loosely onto sides of pan to hold in place. This prevents overbrowning, allows for maximum heat circulation, keeps the turkey moist, and reduces oven splatter.

When using a meat thermometer, insert it through the foil into the thickest part of the thigh muscle without touching the bone. The inner thigh is the area that heats most slowly. For turkey parts, insert the thermometer in the thickest area.

Roast according to the following chart. To brown the turkey, remove the foil tent 20 to 30 minutes before roasting is finished, and continue cooking until the thermometer registers 185°F.

Basting is usually not necessary during roasting since it cannot penetrate the turkey. Also, opening the oven door frequently prolongs the cooking time.

ROASTING CHART

The following times are based on an oven preheated to 325°F. Plan the roasting time for a large bird so it will be done about 20 minutes before serving. Allowing the turkey to stand, covered loosely with aluminum foil, makes the meat easier to carve and juicier.

Timetable for Roasting Fresh or Thawed Turkey or Turkey Parts

Weight (pounds)	Unstuffed (hours)	Stuffed (hours)
4 to 6 (breasts)	1½ to 2¼	Not applicable
6 to 8	2¼ to 3¼	3 to 3½
8 to 12	3 to 4	3½ to 4½
12 to 16	3½ to 4½	4½ to 5½
16 to 20	4 to 5	5½ to 6½
20 to 24	4½ to 5½	6½ to 7
24 to 28	5 to 6½	7 to 8½
Drumsticks, quarters, thighs	2 to 3½	Not applicable

You should not partially roast a stuffed turkey one day and complete roasting the next. Interrupted cooking enhances the possibility of bacterial growth.

It seems every holiday season brings publicity about a new way of cooking turkey, promising excellent results. One that has been publicized recently is long cooking at a very low temperature (250°F). This method is *not* recommended. Because of the low temperature, the turkey (and stuffing) might take more than 4 hours to reach a high enough temperature to destroy bacteria, and could therefore be unsafe. The quality of the turkey might suffer, too. During prolonged cooking, some areas would tend to become very dry.

Testing for Doneness

The most reliable method for detecting when your turkey is thoroughly cooked is using a meat thermometer. See page 9 for instructions on how to insert a thermometer. A whole turkey is done when the temperature reaches 180°F to 185°F in the inner thigh. Dark meat turkey pieces are done at 180°F to 185°F and white meat turkey pieces at 170°F. Stuffing temperature should reach at least 165°F. To check the stuffing, insert the thermometer through the body cavity into the thickest part of the stuffing and leave it for 5 minutes. The stuffing temperature will rise a few degrees after the turkey is removed from the oven.

Another method for testing doneness is to press the fleshy part of the thigh with protected fingers. If the meat feels soft, or if the leg moves up and down easily and the hip joint gives readily or breaks, the turkey is done.

Doneness can also be detected by inserting a long-tined fork into the thickest area of the inner thigh. If the juices run clear, not pink, the turkey is done.

As soon as your turkey is completely cooked, you should remove all the stuffing from the cavities. Harmful bacteria is more likely to grow in the stuffing if it sits in the bird after cooking. If you do not need all the stuffing for first servings, you can put the remaining stuffing in the oven at 200°F to keep hot until you need it.

Additional Cooking Methods

OVEN COOKING BAGS

Preparing a turkey in an oven cooking bag is a moist-heat cooking method that produces a moist, tender bird. When using oven cooking bags, preheat your oven to 350°F. Shake 1 tablespoon of flour in the bag to prevent bursting. Place celery and onion slices in the bottom of the bag to help prevent the turkey from sticking and to add flavor. Place the turkey on top of the vegetables, close the bag with the enclosed tie, and make 6 half-inch slits in the top to let steam escape. Insert meat thermometer through a slit in the bag. When your turkey is done, cut or slit the top of the bag down the center. Loosen the bag from the turkey so there is no sticking and carefully remove the turkey to a serving platter.

As with the traditional oven roasting method, the turkey will be done when it reaches 180°F to 185°F.

Roasting Chart for Fresh or Thawed Turkey Cooked in an Oven Cooking Bag

Weight (pounds)	Unstuffed (hours)	Stuffed (hours)
8 to 12	1¾ to 2¼	2¼ to 2¾
12 to 16	2¼ to 2¾	2¾ to 3¼
16 to 20	2¾ to 3¼	3¼ to 3¾
20 to 24	3¼ to 3¾	3¾ to 4¼

Using ordinary brown bags for roasting is not recommended because they may not be sanitary. Also, the glue and ink used on brown bags have not been approved for use as cooking materials, and may give off unhealthful fumes. Finally, as the turkey cooks, the juices may saturate the bag, causing it to break during cooking.

MICROWAVE COOKING

When microwaving a turkey, check the owner's manual for the size bird that will fit in your oven, and for the time and power level to use. Using an oven cooking bag ensures the most even cooking.

Some microwave ovens do not cook food evenly and "cold spots" develop, especially when cooking dense food like a stuffed turkey. Some sections of the turkey will be done before others are thoroughly cooked, particularly the stuffing. Therefore, microwaving a stuffed turkey is not recommended.

OUTDOOR COOKING

Turkey parts can be cooked on a barbecue grill; a whole turkey or turkey parts can be cooked in a covered kettle grill. Charcoal makes a hot fire. To build your fire, you can line the grill with heavy-duty aluminum foil to aid even cooking and ease cleanup. Stack the coals in a pyramid and follow the directions on the lighter fluid. Once the coals are white-hot, spread the coals to form an even layer.

When using a barbecue grill, be sure racks are 6 to 8 inches from the embers for an even heat without too much intensity. Small turkey quarter roasts are excellent for this method of cooking. Young fryer-roaster turkeys weighing 6 to 8 pounds can be cut into individual servings. The turkey pieces will take at least an hour to cook, depending on their size and thickness. Turn them occasionally while they are cooking. If they start to char, raise the grill farther from the heat.

When using a covered grill, arrange charcoal on both sides of the fire bowl with a drip pan in the center of the coals. Place the whole turkey on a rack over the drip pan. Cover the grill. Add a few coals to each side of the drip pan every hour. To give it a hickory-smoked flavor, sprinkle one-half of a cup of water-soaked hickory chips or flakes over the coals during the last half hour of cooking. If you prefer a heavier hickory-smoked flavor, add more chips or flakes.

You should allow 15 to 18 minutes per pound for an unstuffed turkey cooked on a covered grill. For a stuffed turkey, allow 18 to 24 minutes per pound.

ROTISSERIE COOKING

Whole turkeys (unstuffed) can be cooked on a special rotisserie that turns the meat slowly on a rotary spit over direct heat. Since rotisseries vary greatly, follow the directions that come with the equipment.

Before turning on the spit, be sure to balance and mount the bird. See that the turkey does not slip as the spit turns.

To mount a whole turkey on a rotisserie spit, attach the neck skin with a skewer to the back of the body. Tie or skewer the wings close to the body. Insert the spit through the length of the body and tighten the holding prongs. Tie the tail and drumsticks firmly to the rod. If properly balanced, the turkey should rotate evenly when the spit is turned.

Timetable for Cooking Turkey on a Rotisserie

Ready-to-Cook Weight	Cooking Time (hours)
6 to 8 pounds	3 to 3½
8 to 10 pounds	3½ to 4
10 to 12 pounds	4 to 5

COOKING A SOLIDLY FROZEN TURKEY

A whole frozen turkey without giblets and neck can be roasted, braised or stewed without thawing. Turkey parts can also be cooked without thawing. The turkey should be cooked in a preheated 325°F oven.

Timetable for Roasting Solidly Frozen Turkey

Weight (pounds)	Cooking Time (hours)
12 to 16	7½ to 8½
16 to 20	8 to 9⅓
20 to 24	9 to 10
Half, breast	4¼ to 6¼
Drumsticks, quarters, thighs	2 to 3¾

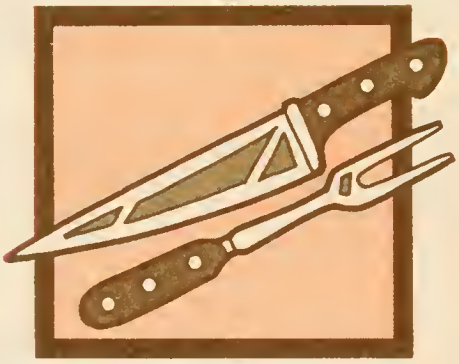
COOKING GIBLETS AND NECK

To prepare the giblets and neck for cooking, wash thoroughly. Remove any separable fat from the gizzard.

If you need broth for gravy, cover the neck, gizzard, and heart with water and simmer until tender: about 1½ hours or more. Add the liver during the last 15 to 30 minutes of cooking, and simmer until done.

If you don't need broth for gravy, seal the giblets and neck tightly in aluminum foil and cook the wrapped pieces in the pan with the turkey. Giblets will cook in about the same time as the turkey.

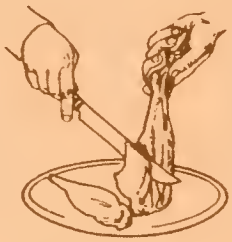
How To Carve A Turkey



Remember, you'll get better results carving your turkey if you allow it to stand 20 minutes after you take it out of the oven.

CARVING A TURKEY Method 1 *(Traditional Method)*

1. Remove drumstick and thigh — To remove drumstick and thigh, press leg away from body. Joint connecting leg to the hip will oftentimes snap free or may be severed easily with knife point. Cut dark meat completely from body by following body contour carefully with knife.



2. Slicing dark meat — Place drumstick and thigh on cutting surface and cut through connecting joint. Both pieces may be individually sliced. Tilt drumstick to convenient angle, slicing towards table as shown in illustration.

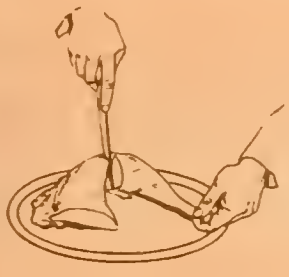
3. Slicing thigh — To slice thigh meat, hold firmly on cutting surface with fork. Cut even slices parallel to the bone.

4. Preparing breast — In preparing breast for easy slicing, place knife parallel and as close to wing as possible. Make deep cut into breast, cutting right to bone. This is your base cut. All breast slices will stop at this horizontal cut.

5. Carving breasts — After making base cut, carve downward, ending at base cut. Start each new slice slightly higher up on breast. Keep slices thin and even.

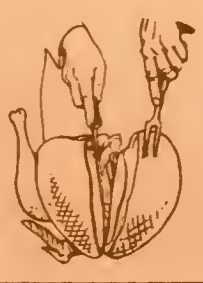
CARVING A TURKEY Method 2 *(Kitchen Carving Method)*

1. Remove drumstick and thigh by pressing leg away from body. Joint connecting leg to backbone will often snap free or may be severed easily with knife point. Cut dark meat completely from body by following body contour carefully with a knife.

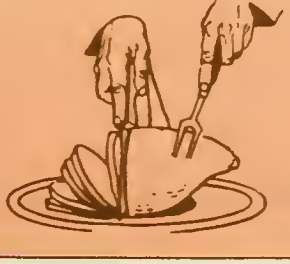


2. Place drumsticks and thigh on separate plate and cut through connecting joint. Both pieces may be individually sliced. Tilt drumstick to convenient angle, slicing towards plate.

3. To slice thigh meat, hold firmly on plate with fork. Cut even slices parallel to the bone.



4. Remove half of the breast at a time by cutting along keel bone and rib cage with sharp knife.



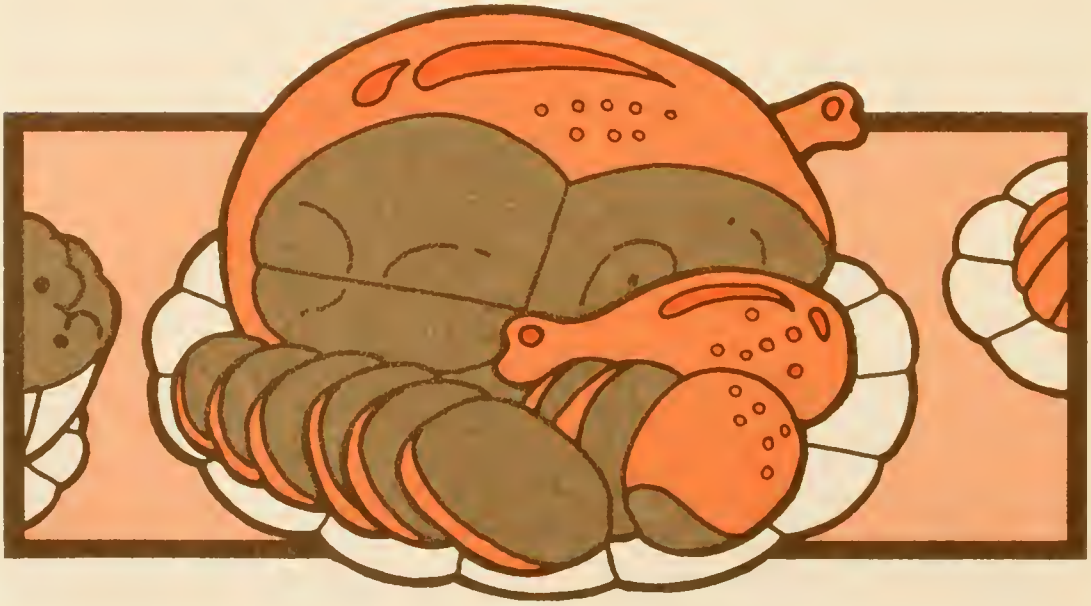
5. Place half breast on cutting surface and slice evenly against the grain of the meat. Repeat with second half breast when additional slices are needed.

Buffet Entertaining

Holiday buffets are festive and fun, but they require extra care in preparing, storing, and serving the food. Consider how many guests you can safely serve. Be sure you have enough refrigerator space for the perishable foods. Keep buffet servings small, and replenish the serving dishes as needed, directly from the stove or refrigerator.

You may want to use heated serving units such as hot trays or chafing dishes to keep food hot. Remember, though, when food is left out for more than 2 hours, even in heated serving units, the risk of food poisoning increases.

When all your guests have finished eating, put the perishables — especially the turkey and other meat and poultry products — back into the refrigerator.



How To Store Leftovers

So far, so good. You bought the kind of turkey you wanted because you read the label. You thawed it properly and cooked it according to the directions. Now, what do you do with the leftovers?

Handling cooked turkey incorrectly can result in food poisoning. Think of the post-cooking stage as a countdown which begins when you take the turkey out of the oven. From that time, you have approximately 2 hours to serve it and then refrigerate or freeze the leftovers — the turkey, stuffing, and gravy. Why just two hours? Because bacteria that cause food poisoning can multiply to undesirable levels on perishable food left at room temperature for longer than that.

It is important to take out all of the stuffing from the turkey as soon as you remove the bird from the oven. Extra stuffing can be kept hot in the oven at 200°F while you eat, or can be refrigerated.

How you store the leftovers is also important in preventing bacterial growth. Large quantities should be divided into smaller portions and stored in several small or shallow covered containers. That's because food in small amounts will get cold more quickly.

Leftover turkey will keep in the refrigerator for 3 to 4 days. Stuffing and gravy should be used within 1 or 2 days. Bring leftover gravy to a rolling boil before serving.

For longer storage, package items in freezer paper or heavy-duty aluminum foil and freeze them. Proper wrapping will prevent "freezer burn" — white dried-out patches on the surface of food that make it tough and tasteless. Don't forget to date your packages and use the oldest ones first. Frozen turkey, stuffing, and gravy should be used within 1 month.

RECIPES

STUFFINGS

Savory Bread Stuffing

Makes 4 cups, uncooked

Celery, finely chopped	3/4 cup
Onion, finely chopped	2 tablespoons
Parsley, chopped	3 tablespoons
Butter or margarine	3 tablespoons
Bread cubes, soft	1 quart
Savory	1/2 teaspoon
Salt	1/2 teaspoon
Pepper	1/8 teaspoon

1. Cook celery, onion, and parsley in butter or margarine until tender.
2. Mix lightly with remaining ingredients.
3. Stuff inside the turkey, or bake covered in a separate pan during last hour of roasting the turkey.

Calories per cup unbaked stuffing: about 190.

Notes: Allow about 3/4 cup of stuffing per pound of ready-to-cook turkey. For more moist stuffing when baked separately, add 1 tablespoon of chicken or turkey broth per cup of uncooked stuffing.

VARIATIONS

Oyster Stuffing
Reduce celery to 1/2 cup and parsley to 1 tablespoon. Add 12 fluid ounces of oysters, heated for 3 minutes in their own liquid and drained. Calories per cup of unbaked stuffing: about 235.

Cornbread Stuffing
Omit bread cubes and savory. Add 1 quart of cornbread crumbs and

1/2 teaspoon of thyme. Calories per cup of unbaked stuffing: about 330.

Fruit Stuffing
Omit parsley and savory. Reduce bread cubes to 3 cups. Add 1½ cups of chopped tart apple and 1/2 cup of cooked, pitted, chopped prunes. Calories per cup of unbaked stuffing: about 220.

GRAVIES

Turkey Gravy

6 servings, about 1/4 cup each

Butter or margarine	1 tablespoon
Flour	3 tablespoons
Salt	1/4 teaspoon
Turkey broth	1½ cups

1. Melt butter or margarine over low heat; mix in flour and salt.
2. Heat and stir until bubbly.
3. Add broth slowly, stirring constantly.
4. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly, for at least 13 minutes.

Calories per serving: about 35.

Giblet Gravy
Add 1/2 cup of chopped, cooked giblets to turkey gravy. Heat for a few minutes to blend flavors. Calories per serving: about 60.

LEFTOVERS

Turkey-Broccoli Casserole

6 servings, about 1 cup each

Noodles, uncooked	4 ounces (about 3 cups)
Broccoli spears, frozen	10-ounce package
Butter or margarine	2 tablespoons
Flour	2 tablespoons
Salt	1/2 teaspoon
Dry mustard	1/4 teaspoon
Pepper	1/8 teaspoon
Milk	2 cups
Processed cheddar cheese, shredded	1 cup (about 3¾ ounces)
Turkey, cooked, diced	3 cups

1. Cook noodles and broccoli as directed on packages; drain.
2. Melt butter or margarine; stir in flour and seasonings.
3. Add milk slowly; cook, stirring constantly, until thickened.
4. Remove from heat; add cheese and stir until melted.
5. Dice broccoli stems, leave flowerets whole.
6. Place noodles, broccoli stems, and turkey in an 8 × 8 × 2 inch baking dish.
7. Pour cheese sauce over ingredients in baking dish.
8. Arrange broccoli flowerets on top, pressing them into sauce.
9. Bake, uncovered, at 350°F (moderate), for about 25 minutes or until bubbly.

Calories per serving: about 425.

Turkey Salad

6 servings, about 2/3 cup each

Turkey, cooked, diced	3 cups
Celery, chopped	1 cup
Pickles, sweet, chopped	1/4 cup
Eggs, hard-cooked, chopped	2
Salad dressing, mayonnaise-type	1/2 cup
Lemon juice	1 tablespoon
Salt	1/4 teaspoon
Lettuce leaves	6

1. Mix turkey, celery, pickles, and eggs together lightly.
2. Mix salad dressing, lemon juice, and salt until smooth.
3. Gently stir salad dressing into turkey mixture.
4. Chill thoroughly.
5. Serve on lettuce leaves.

Calories per serving: about 265.

Turkey Gumbo Soup

6 servings, about 1 cup each

Turkey or chicken broth	3 cups
Onion, chopped	1/2 cup
Celery, chopped	1/4 cup
Okra, cut, frozen	10-ounce package
Tomatoes	16-ounce can
Salt	1/2 teaspoon
Pepper	1/8 teaspoon
Rice, uncooked	1/4 cup
Turkey, cooked, diced	2 cups

1. Heat broth to boiling.
2. Add vegetables, seasonings, rice, and turkey.
3. Cover and cook slowly 15 minutes, until vegetables and rice are tender.

Calories per serving: about 170.

The Meat And Poultry Hotline

800-535-4555*

(Washington, D.C. area residents
call 447-3333*)

We hope you have found the information in *Talking About Turkey* helpful. But should you have additional questions about turkey or other meat and poultry products, you can contact the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Meat and Poultry Hotline for assistance.

Staffed by home economists, the hotline operates weekdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Eastern Time. Our hotline experts can answer your questions on the proper handling of meat and poultry, how to tell if it's safe to eat, and how to better understand meat and poultry labels.

They can also tell you how to handle problems with meat and poultry products.

To report a faulty product, first refrigerate it — if possible, in the original container. Second, notify the store where you bought it. THEN call the Hotline. They'll tell you what you should do, and whether health authorities should be notified.

You can also write to: The Meat and Poultry Hotline
USDA-FSIS, Rm. 1165-S
Washington, D.C. 20250

*These numbers are accessible by Telecommunications Devices for the Deaf.

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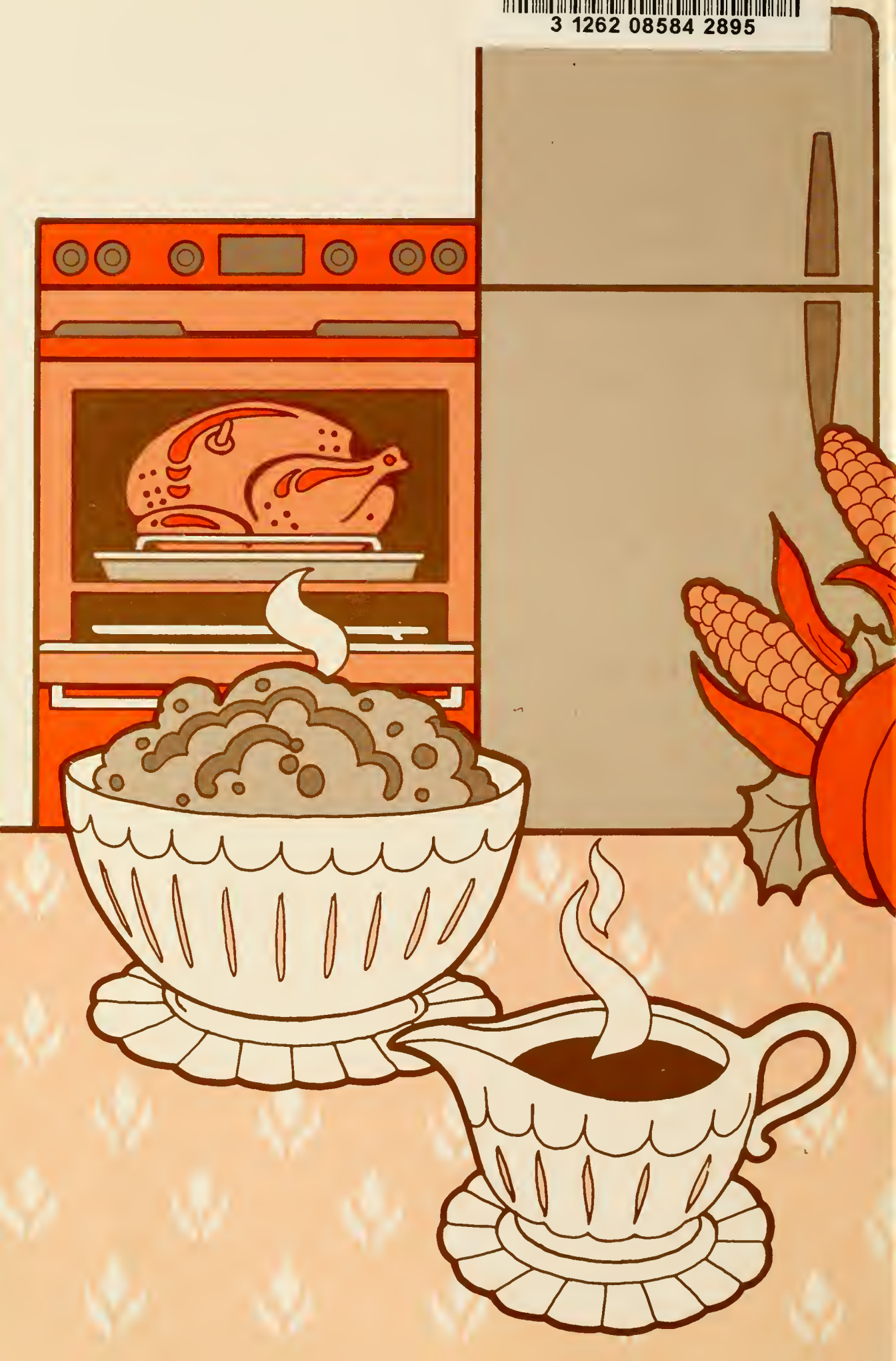
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